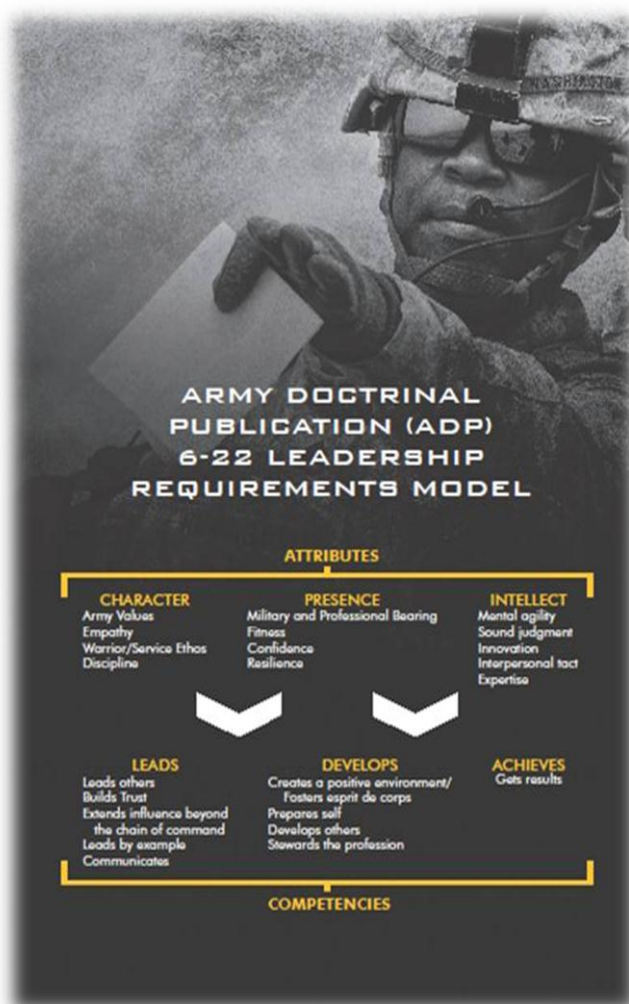




Published: April 2012 in <http://cape.army.mil>

“Fellow Commander”



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For all members of the Army Profession

<http://cape.army.mil>

“Fellow Commander”

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1. Checklist

- ☐ Recruit additional strong/respected leaders from your unit to be facilitators with your unit. (Recruit as many as the situation mandates)
- ☐ Watch the video and read the transcript prior to your facilitation.
- ☐ Review the additional resources.
- ☐ Review the “How to run your workshop” guidelines prior to facilitating.
- ☐ Think about a personal experience that relates to the scenario.
- ☐ Resource Prep:
 - Make copies of the video transcripts and facilitation questions as needed for each of your facilitators.
 - If you plan on showing video clips, test to make sure they work on the system in your designated training area.
 - Make sure you have a whiteboard with dry-erase markers.

2. Who's Who



JC Stroh was an Infantry Captain and a fellow Commander in the same Battalion as John Goodwin.



John Goodwin was the Company Commander for Bravo Company.

3. “Fellow Commander” Video Transcript: JC Stroh discusses Leader Attributes and his friend John Goodwin (Part I)



JC Stroh deployed to Iraq in 2005 as an infantry captain. He led a military transition team from the battalion headquarters and got along well with the battalion

commander. His friend John commanded a company of the same battalion from a forward operating base in a fiercely contested area. John received constant criticism from the battalion commander.

“There were plenty of days where I would run into John, or he’d be at Mahmudiyah for a meeting, or I’d be at Yusufiyah on patrol and he’d confide in me that he thought he was going to be fired—maybe that day, maybe in the next few days. Often it was a traumatic event that had caused his thinking he would be fired. We’re talking about the death of a Soldier or a tactical event that went wrong, plans that didn’t work out or your base burning down by accident. These things, in of themselves, were already traumatic. He’s already dealing with that stress and trying to repair.

John is a great guy! He’s a family man. He’s honest. He’s hardworking. He can get along with the simplest and lowest in the Army.

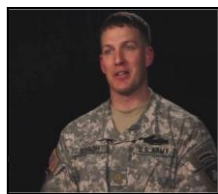
He comes from a blue-collar roots. He is genuinely a kind and enjoyable person to be around.

As the deployment wore on, I think what bothered me most was seeing his personal condition deteriorate. It’s one thing to be really tired for a few days at a time in combat—it’s just a leader’s burden to not get as much sleep as your guys—but there were weeks when I would run into John and he’d be at Mahmudiyah for a meeting and he looked like a zombie.

As a friend, I’d just say, ‘Hey, you look terrible. When’s the last time you’ve slept?’ It was always, ‘One or two hours last night, nothing the night before.’ Or, ‘One or two hours the night before.’ So him telling me that he could be fired tomorrow, it was a real challenge to know what to say to him.

How do you comfort him? How do you acknowledge what he is saying is probably completely true? How do you conduct yourself as a friend and a professional all at the same time?”

4. “Fellow Commander” Video Transcript: JC Stroh discusses Leader Attributes and his friend John Goodwin (Part II)



“I think most often I defaulted on trying to encourage the man because I saw it building John back up with whatever small ways I could. Whether it

was just a friendly conversation, giving him some physical rest, even supporting his unit when there was no official call for me to do so; it was the only way I could do it without jeopardizing the mission.

I didn’t want to protect him or shield him from his burdens of command. I only wanted to add to the success or avoid the failure of his unit by helping him. As a friend, I was just concerned that he was reaching breaking points. Sometimes he would show up literally have been hit two or three times by an IED en-route to a meeting. At that point, I just tried to take him in. My company TOC was just a tent near the battalion headquarters ... pour him a cup of coffee, see if he needs to take a 30-minute catnap before we go to the meeting.

I deferred to the sympathy rule a lot of times and just (tried) to comfort him, (tried) to be his

one friend that week, (tried to) talk about his family. He’s a great family man. He has three wonderful daughters—anything to get his mind off the situation. That may have been a fault of mine of being more concerned with trying to cheer him up or give him rest or respite than calling him out and saying ‘Hey, I think there’s a serious problem here.’

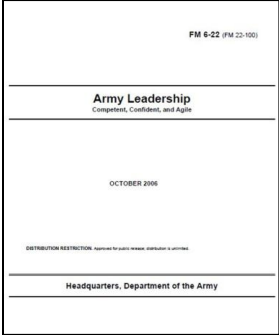

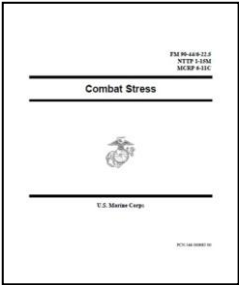
Sometimes he honestly told me that he was expecting to be fired any day. I couldn’t look at him in the eye and say anything but, ‘Yah, well I hope it’s done right.’

It’s really hard to look at a friend of yours and know he’s coming to the realization that his failures—or the failures of his subordinate, maybe not directly his fault—are going to cause him to be fired. That was a real challenge.

In retrospect, I think about it a lot of times. Should I have been a little bit more stern? Should I have said, ‘Hey, wake up man. You have got to sleep!’ Should I have ordered him to sleep as a peer? Was I too hard on him sometimes? I struggle with that. It’s a hard balance. Literally today, I still think about.”

5. Additional Resources

The following resources are available:

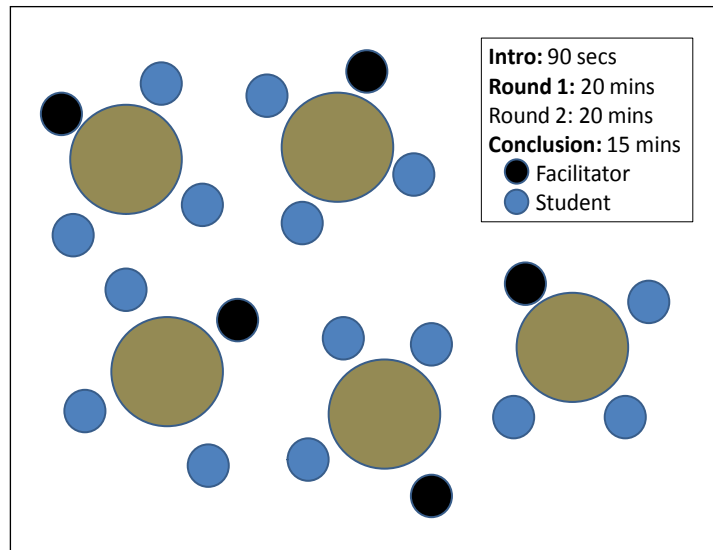
	<p><u>FM 6-22 Army Leadership</u> Leadership Requirements Model</p> <p>2-14. The model's basic components center on what a leader is and what a leader does. The leader's character, presence and intellect enable the leader to master the core leader competencies through dedicated lifelong learning. The balanced application of the critical leadership requirements empowers the Army leader to build high-performing and cohesive organizations able to effectively project and support landpower. It also creates positive organizational climates, allowing for individual and team learning and empathy for all team members, Soldiers, civilians and their families.</p>
	<p><u>"Fatigue and its Effect on Performance in Military Environments"</u></p> <p>Article: http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA487169 By: L.L. Miller, P. Matsangas and L.G. Shattuck</p> <p>This article from the Naval Postgraduate School discusses initial military actions in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the fact sleep deprivation was considered a "normal" part of combat. They make the (scientific) case that such consistent sleep deprivation is a hazard to the well-being of Soldiers and mission success and urges leaders to re-look how they treat the importance of sleep.</p>
	<p><u>FM 90-44/6-22.5</u></p> <p><i>Combat Stress</i> is the mental, emotional or physical tension, strain or distress resulting from exposure to combat and combat-related conditions. Controlling combat stress is a command responsibility. In terms of Service members lost from action and reduced performance, combat stress seriously affects mission accomplishment. It is a leader's responsibility to take action to strengthen Service members' tolerance to combat stress and manage it in his or her unit.</p>

6. How to run your workshop

The basic concept provided below is a way to facilitate this module. Modify as necessary to fit the needs and demographics of the group. We find that having a variety of ranks/leadership positions in each group increases perspective and maximizes takeaway.

PREP: Have a whiteboard and markers available. Bring copies of the video transcripts. Have a Facilitator Guide available for each facilitator. Get there early and set up the room in huddles large enough to support a variety of leadership at each table. Put chairs around one table (keep people close), rather than pulling several tables together.

BASIC CONCEPT: Meet for 55 minutes to discuss the module. The group breaks down into huddles large enough to support a variety of leadership at each table. For example, you want to have SLs, PSGs PLs and CDRs in the same huddle so you can maximize the overall effectiveness and increase the number of vantage points. Have one facilitator at each table to guide (NOT LEAD) the discussion. The workshop begins with facilitators asking the participants what their response was to the module. The facilitators' main role is to be a catalyst for conversation and learning about the topic at hand. This module includes three rounds of discussion and ends with personal stories and vignettes that relate to the module.



KEYS TO SUCCESS:

- Let participants do most of the talking.
- The facilitators' key role is to ask questions that spark thought and conversation.
- Ensure you engage each level of leadership and everyone within your group. Do not let any one person dominate the conversation.
- Have questions prepped for each round to drive the conversation. (See "Detailed Plan" on page 6)
- You are a catalyst for conversation. Make sure that you continue to ask questions that make your group dig deeper.

7. Detailed plan for your workshop

INTRODUCTION (90 seconds)

Introduce the Workshop in a way that communicates the purpose of the event.

"Today we're going to look at the Stress and Combat Fatigue of a Company Commander in Iraq and discuss the Leadership Requirements Model."

ROUND 1 - (20 minutes): Discuss Combat Fatigue and Leadership Requirements

[Watch Part I of "Fellow Commander"]

1. Stroh describes his friend and fellow commander John. He says, "I think what bothered me most was seeing his personal condition deteriorate." What signs did Stroh see in John that caused him to worry?
2. Stroh says, "Often it was a traumatic event that had caused his thinking he would be fired." How do traumatic events affect Soldiers' thinking?
3. Consider a time when you have noticed a battle buddy suffering and performing poorly. A) What was your response? B) What prompted you to respond that way?
4. Consider Stroh's obligations. A) At what point is he responsible to tell someone higher in the chain-of-command about John's behaviors? B) To what extent does he need to confront his friend?
5. What could be the possible outcomes if Stroh chose to do nothing?
6. In making a decision Stroh asks, "How do you conduct yourself as a friend and a professional at the same time?" Stroh weighs both roles. A) In what ways can those roles complement one another? B) In what ways can those roles contradict each other? C) How do those roles relate to Stroh's core identity?
7. Consider a time when you have observed (or been) a leader who lives in fear of being fired or reprimanded. What was the impact on the unit?
8. How does Stroh's dilemma tie into the idea of stewardship?
9. How are you a steward of the Army Profession?
10. Consider the Leader Attributes from the Leader Requirements Model in ADP 6-22. In what ways could Stroh demonstrate empathy?
11. What other Leader Attributes or Competencies are particularly significant in this situation?

7. Detailed plan for your workshop (continued)

ROUND 2-Part II (20 minutes): Discuss Combat Fatigue and Leadership Requirements

[Watch Part II of “Fellow Commander”]

1. A) How can we know if Stroh made the right decision? B) What, if anything, would you have done differently?
2. Stroh says, “I didn’t want to protect (John) or shield him from his burdens of command. I only wanted to add to the success or avoid the failure of his unit by helping him.” What do you think of this perspective?
3. Stroh says he, “defaulted on trying to encourage the man,” and, “deferred to the sympathy rule.” Why might he view his actions as, “defaulting,” or, “deferring,” to an action?
4. Through service together, Soldiers often build strong unity and trust. For Stroh, this created tension as he observed his friend struggle professionally. What is the right balance of professional duties and friendship?
5. What do Stroh’s actions say about him as a leader? As a person?
6. How confident do you think Stroh is with how he handled the situation?
7. What level of confidence do you display in decision-making?
8. What are some of the reasons Stroh might be conflicted about how he handled the situation?
9. The events that Stroh described occurred more than five years before the interview. At the end he says, “Literally, today, I still think about that.” A) Why is it that decisions made in combat can carry emotional weight so many years later? B) Do you still carry the emotional weight of a past decision?
10. Consider this situation in terms of resilience. A) How would you describe John’s resilience? B) Based on what you know, what rating would you give his resilience? C) In comparison, how would you rate Stroh’s resilience?
11. How might Stroh’s actions help to build John’s resilience?

7. Detailed plan for your workshop (continued)

ROUND 3-Conclusion (20 minutes): Personal Vignettes and takeaways.

Facilitator asks students to share any personal vignettes and takeaways from the module.

It is important for the group to relate to this story on a personal level. Conclude the module emphasizing the impact of Combat Fatigue and the Leadership Requirements Model. Leaders should walk away with a better understanding of Leadership Requirements and the significant impact of Combat Stress on a unit and the Soldier as an individual.

Upon concluding, the following questions are useful for determining learning and promoting reflection:

Learning	Q - What did you learn from listening to the reactions and reflections of other leaders? Q - What are the future implications of this decision and or experience?
Reflection	Q - How do you feel/what do you think about what you learned? Q - What will you do with your new information? Q – How can you integrate new learning into your Command team philosophy, command structure and climate?